

UPDATED INFORMATIVE DIGEST

Sections Affected: Amendments to title 17, California Code of Regulations (CCR), sections 60201, 60202, 60205, and 60210 pursuant to sections 39608 and 40925.5 of the Health and Safety Code (H&SC).

Summary: Pursuant to section 39606 of the Health and Safety Code (H&SC), the California Air Resources Board (Board or ARB) is charged with the responsibility of adopting standards of ambient air quality for each air basin in consideration of the public health, safety, and welfare. The Board has adopted State ambient air quality standards (State Standards) for ten pollutants, set forth in CCR, title 17, section 70200. The California Clean Air Act in H&SC section 39607(e) requires the Board to establish designation criteria which provide the basis for designating areas of California as attainment, nonattainment, nonattainment-transitional, or unclassified with respect to the State standards.

The Board originally adopted designation criteria in 1989 and has modified them several times since then, the last time in January 2004. The designation criteria are set forth in CCR, title 17, sections 70300 through 70306, and appendices 1 through 4, thereof. Based on these designation criteria, the California Clean Air Act in H&SC section 39608 further requires the ARB to establish and annually review area designations for State standards. During the annual review, ARB determines whether changes to the existing area designations are warranted, based on an evaluation of recent air quality data.

The Board makes area designations for ten pollutants: ozone, suspended particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine suspended particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, sulfates, lead, hydrogen sulfide, and visibility reducing particles. The area designations comprise CCR, title 17, sections 60200 through 60210. The ARB staff reviewed the area designations, based on air quality data from 2001 through 2003. Based on this review, on January 20, 2005, the Board adopted amendments to several of the existing area designations for carbon monoxide, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. These amendments are summarized below:

Carbon Monoxide: The Board designated the Los Angeles County portion of the South Coast Air Basin as attainment. This area was previously designated as nonattainment-transitional. With this change, the entire South Coast Air Basin area now attains the State carbon monoxide standards.

PM10: The Board designated Siskiyou County in the Northeast Plateau Air Basin as attainment. This area was previously designated as nonattainment.

PM2.5: The Board designated the Lake Tahoe Air Basin as attainment. This area was previously designated as unclassified. The Board also designated the North Central Coast Air Basin as attainment. This area was previously designated as unclassified.

In addition to the above designation changes, the Board confirmed the following designation change (which occurred by operation of law under H&SC section 40925.5) for ozone:

Ozone: The Board confirmed the change in designation for the North Central Coast Air Basin (specified in CCR, title 17, section 60201) from nonattainment to nonattainment-transitional. This redesignation occurred by operation of law, and the Board adopted amendments to the area designation regulations to reflect this change.

The staff proposal was the same as that described in the Initial Statement of Reasons for Proposed Rulemaking (Staff Report) released on December 3, 2004. At the hearing, the California Air Resources Board adopted the amendments to the area designation regulations as proposed by the staff.